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Leadership: Where Does It Come From?

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TITLE: LEADERSHIP: WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

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BRIEF SUMMARY:

Leadership always has been, and probably always will be, an important factor in carrying out the affairs of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). But recently both the need for leadership in managerial jobs and the difficulty of providing effective leadership have grown to be more of a challenge than many at the CIA realize. Senior CIA officials will need to lead not manage their way through the challenges facing them in this decade.

The purpose of this paper is to systematically outline where leadership comes from and highlight those leadership aspects that senior CIA officials should factor into their strategic planning. The premise of this paper is that leaders count, that people in senior positions can, and should make a difference. Our future is not predetermined. What will occur in the next decade is in large part, the result of decisions that CIA leaders make. Leadership decisions that will not only shape the future of the Agency, but also the nation.

Leaders in the CIA must have those fundamental qualities of infectious self-confidence, unwavering optimism, and irreversible idealism to attract and mobilize our workforce. This is the true task of the leader.

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DEDICATION

To my wife Charlene for her continued and unwavering support to the research that went into this paper and my studies this year at ICAF.

To the senior leadership at the Central Intelligence Agency; may they have the vision to factor the role of leadership into the development of new intelligence strategies as they mold and shape the CIA of the future.

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ABSTRACT

Leadership always has been, and probably always will be, an important factor in carrying out the affairs of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). But recently both the need for leadership in managerial jobs and the difficulty of providing effective leadership have grown to be more of a challenge than many at the CIA realize. Senior CIA officials will need to lead not manage their way through the challenges facing them in this decade.

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Leaders in the CIA must have those fundamental qualities of infectious self-confidence, unwavering optimism, and irreversible idealism to attract and mobilize our workforce. This is the true task of the leader.

Whoever would be the leader of men let him begin by leading himself before leading others; and let him lead by example before leading by word. For he who leads himself and rectifies his own ways is more deserving of respect and reverence than he who would lead others and rectify their ways.¹

- Kahlil Gibran

INTRODUCTION

The origin of leadership is a subject of enormous scope. The purpose of this paper is to systematically outline where leadership comes from and highlight those leadership aspects that senior Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officials should factor into their planning as they deal with impending organizational, personnel, and process changes. Resulting leadership problems these changes will bring -- within the directorates, as an Agency, and as an integral part of the intelligence community -- will need to be dealt with as part of the CIA's strategic plan. Senior CIA officials will need to lead not manage their way through the challenges facing them in this decade.

The focus of the discussion will be the nature of leadership in this country today. Examples from other timeframes and cultures and many generalizations will be relevant to the future; but, the focus is now.

My principle premise is that leaders count, that people in senior CIA positions can, and should make a difference. The future is not predetermined. What will occur in the next decade is, in large part, the consequence of decisions that our leaders will make within Government and within our own organization.

For many -- perhaps for most Americans, leadership is a word people overuse without really understanding its meaning.

Leadership as a term has become a kind of cliché. The aura with which we tend to surround the words "leader" and "leadership" needs to be explained in a clear, unambiguous manner.

I will use the word "follower" to represent those individuals or organizations that interact with the leader. You should not interpret a follower to be dependent or passive in his or her actions.

I believe leaders have those fundamental qualities of infectious self-confidence, unwavering optimism, and irreversible idealism that allow them to attract and mobilize followers to undertake tasks these followers did not believe they could undertake.

Each and every leader at the CIA must stop procrastinating and start being honest. In today's dynamic and increasingly complex world, you must work harder to maintain the basic values of pride, honor, and commitment. You must continue to make leaders out of the young men and women of the CIA so that we will not have to ask, "where have all the leaders gone?" Let us begin our journey.

What is the Definition of Leadership?

Leadership as I will use the term is the process of persuasion and example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to take action that agrees with the leader's purposes or shared purposes of the group.² This is the true task of the leader. Leadership involves elements of physical coercion, and of course, there is psychological coercion, however mild and subtle, including peer pressure, in all social interaction. In the

American culture, we place leaders higher on the leadership scale if lesser degrees of coercion are used.³ Coercion will be downplayed in these discussions.

Holding a position of high status does not make one a leader. There are Government department heads, generals, and corporate chief executive officers (CEO) who could not lead a "horse to water." Some men and women holding top posts in governmental and corporate organizations are simply chief bureaucrats or custodians. It does not guarantee one will lead, but it may be a necessary requirement. Some positions carry with them symbolic values and traditions that enhance the possibility of leadership. Americans expect corporation presidents and senior Government officials to lead, which increases the possibility they will.

Authority versus leadership. Authority is different from leadership. *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* defines Authority as legitimized power; a position to exercise power in a certain area. It is traditional or official approval for individuals occupying specified positions to perform certain defined acts. I will use the word authority in a different sense to distinguish it from leadership. For example, a police officer has authority, but not necessarily leadership.

Is There a Distinction Between Leadership and Management?

CIA management reserves the word "manager" for individuals who hold a directive post in an organization. Their job is to preside over the processes by which the organization functions, to allocate resources prudently, and to make the most effective use of its

people. Many writers on leadership have some difficulty distinguishing between leaders and managers. In the process, leaders generally look like a cross between Napoleon and the Pied Piper, and managers like unimaginative buffoons. I have often heard people say, "He or she is a first-class manager, but there isn't a trace of leadership in them." Such a person most likely does not exist. Generally, when one encounters a first-class manager, he turns out to have a lot of leader in him.

I believe the most visionary leader will be faced on occasion with decisions that every manager faces: when to take a short-term loss to get a long-term gain, how to allocate scarce and competing resources among important goals, or who to trust with a sensitive matter. Though it has become commonplace to contrast leaders and managers, this paper will use slightly different categories: putting leaders and leader/managers into one category and placing those managers who would not normally be described as leaders in the other. This distinction is important to the CIA as both categories exist in our organizational structure. There are at least six aspects in which leaders and leader/managers distinguish themselves from the general category of managers (several of these aspects will be discussed later in the paper):

1. They think longer term -- beyond the day's crises, beyond the monthly report, beyond the horizon.
2. They look beyond the division or office they are heading and grasp its relationship to larger realities -- the larger organization of which they are a part, conditions external to the

organization, national and international trends.

3. They reach and influence followers beyond their jurisdiction and beyond boundaries. Thomas Jefferson influenced people all over Europe.⁴ Gandhi influenced people all over the world.⁵ Their capacity to rise above jurisdictional boundaries may enable them to bind together the fragmented followers that must work together to solve a problem.

4. They emphasize the intangibles of vision, values, honor, and motivation understanding intuitively the non-rational and unconscious elements in the leader-follower interaction.

5. They possess political skill to cope with the conflicting requirements of multiple followers or organizations.

6. They think in terms of renovating. The manager often accepts the structure and processes as they exist. The leader or leader/manager understands the need to change processes and/or structures as part of a dynamic environment.

The manager is more tightly linked to an organization than the leader. In fact, the leader may have no organization at all. Gandhi was a leader before he had an organization. Some of our most memorable leaders have headed movements so formless that management would be an inappropriate word.

LEADERSHIP ELEMENTS

So far, we have taken an introductory look at the definition of leadership and the distinction between leadership and management. Now, we turn to a leader's attributes and behavior, how history makes a leader, a leader's judgment, and leadership's

role in a team environment. Let us begin with a look at the first of these characteristics.

What are the Successful Attributes and Behavior of a Leader?

We hear and read many statements that describe leaders as having such and such traits and behaving in such and such a fashion -- as though one could derive out of the large and diverse pool of leaders an idealized picture of The Leader.

How can one think other than pluralistically about the leaders that walk the pages of history: Churchill, the eloquent statesman-warrior; Gandhi, the visionary and shrewd mobilizer of his people; James Madison, the brilliantly analytical designer of our political system; Lenin, the coldly purposeful revolutionary. Leaders come in many forms, with many styles and diverse qualities.⁶

Consider just the limited category of military leadership. George Marshall was a modest, low-keyed man with superb judgment, integrity and a limitless capacity to inspire trust. Eisenhower, in his war-time assignment, was an outstanding leader-administrator and coalition builder. Patton was a slashing, intense, temperamental leader whom Churchill said, "In defeat, indomitable; in victory, insufferable."⁷ All were great leaders; extraordinarily diverse in personal attributes and leadership style.

There are a variety of leadership styles and types that are required to deal with the various environments the leader faces. Most organizations seeking to develop young potential leaders have in mind one ideal model, and it is inevitably constricting.

Through leadership education and proper mentoring at the CIA, we can give our young workforce a sense of the kinds of leaders and styles of leadership, and encourage them to move toward the model that is right for them.

Who are some modern day leaders in the CIA, in Government, in industry, and throughout the world that our young workforce should be analyzing? I will leave that question for the reader to ponder.

Does History Make the Leader or Does the Leader Make History?

People once believed that if leadership traits were truly present in an individual they would manifest themselves almost without regard to the situation in which the person was functioning. Few believe that any more. Acts of leadership take place in an unimaginable variety of settings, and the setting does much to determine the kinds of leader that emerge and how they play their roles.⁸

Let us look first at the historical context where leaders emerge, beginning with the question, "Does history make the leader or does the leader make history?" A CIA group director bucking a deteriorating trend in his office feels like a man trying to run up the down escalator. When he looks at a less able leader riding on the coattails of a successful activity in another office, he is more likely to believe the theory that history makes the leader. A more balanced view is that historical forces create the circumstances in which leaders emerge, but the characteristics of the particular leader in turn have their impact on history.

Churchill is an interesting case because he "tried out" for

leadership often before history was ready for him. After Dunkirk, England needed a leader who could rally the British people to heroic efforts in an uncompromising war, and the eloquent, combative Churchill delivered one of the great leadership performances of the century. Subsequently the clock of history ticked on and -- with the war over -- the voters dropped him unceremoniously. A friend told him it was a blessing in disguise and the old warrior growled, "If it is, the disguise is perfect."⁹ Forces of history determined his rise and fall, but in his time he left a uniquely Churchillian mark on the course of events. Current forces will determine the rise and fall of many CIA leaders, but they too will leave their historical mark. The future of the CIA is not already determined. What will happen in the next ten to twenty years is, in large part, the result of decisions that CIA leaders will make today.

Settings. The historical moment is the broadest setting affecting the entry and functioning of leaders. There are yet significantly diverse settings of a more modest nature that clearly affect leadership.

The make-up of the group to be led is a crucial feature, especially in the CIA. The nature of the leadership that will be effective includes characteristics of the individuals to be led, their age level, educational background and competence, the group size, composition and cohesiveness of the group, its motivation and morale, and its rate of turnover.

Leading a Government organization or a corporation is one

thing; leading a mob or street gang is something else. It may take one kind of leader to start a new enterprise and another kind to keep it going. Religious bodies, political parties, Government agencies, and the academic world offer distinctive settings for leadership. The few settings described below suggest their diversity.

Given the role that large-scale governmental and corporate organizations play in contemporary life, we attach considerable interest to their characteristics as a setting for leadership. No doubt, there are fewer spontaneous leader-like acts in this setting than one might expect in less highly structured settings. Hierarchy, impersonality, complex organizational structure, and a pattern of specialized roles tend to reduce the likelihood of leader-like action at many levels within the organization. The formal institutional structure, however, has a limited capacity to suppress the informal exercise of leadership.¹⁰

Another area in which leadership has distinctive characteristics is the organized interest group. Nowhere perhaps, could one find a better example of the proposition that "followers" constrain their leaders. The narrower and more enthusiastic the interest group, the more severe the constraints on the leader. Leaders of narrowly focused followers are only rarely, and then grudgingly, rewarded for compromise. Their assignment, by design, is to exact the last ounce of advantage.

Among the settings in which we exercise leadership, none is more interesting than the American legislative body, considering

not how legislators lead their constituents, but how individuals rise to leadership in the legislative body itself. Where legislative leaders tend to differ from leaders in many other institutions is in their emphasis on the brokering and negotiating aspects of leadership. The prime task of legislators is to get results that appease multiple conflicting interests, and to deal with those irritating circumstances in which equally worthy groups want mutually incompatible things. That requires coalition-building and mediating. It is an honorable and necessary function, but often requires the skills of a horse trader, and the capacity to persuade, coax, threaten, and charm. The leader in this context knows how to reward and punish, how to build networks of obligation, how to collect credits by doing favors, and how to call in the credits when needed.¹¹

In our fast-moving, politically-charged environment filled with shrewd manipulators, Americans place a high value on trust and keeping commitments. Those who place expediency above moral principles eventually defeat themselves; unscrupulous, unreliable, untrustworthy members end up isolated. Americans value candor because it usually means predictability, and Americans dislike surprises.¹²

Leadership takes place in diverse settings. The examples given suggest only a few. We in the CIA exhibit and experience many of these settings.

Judgment of Leaders

As leaders work for results, multiple forces beyond their control, even beyond their knowledge, are moving to hurry or hinder these results. So there is rarely a demonstrable causal link between a leader's specific decisions and resulting events. Consequences, therefore, are not a reliable measure of leadership. Let's look at a few examples.

Franklin Roosevelt's efforts to bolster the economy in the middle to late 1930s were powerfully aided by a factor that did not originate with his economic plan -- the winds of World War II. The leader of a farm workers' union fighting for better wages may find his efforts thwarted by a crop failure.¹³

Frank Lloyd Wright, the famous architect, said, "A doctor can bury his mistakes. An architect can only advise his client to plant vines."¹⁴ Unlike either the doctor or architect, leaders suffer from the mistakes of revered predecessors and leave some of their misjudgments as time bombs for their successors.

Many changes sought by leaders take time: lots of years, long public debate, and slow shifts in attitude. In their lifetime, they may see little result from valiant efforts, yet may be setting the stage in a crucial way for victories that will come after them. Consider for a moment the long, slow unfolding series of battles for racial equality, women's rights, or in current events, the changes taking place in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Leaders who did vitally important early work died without knowing what they had caused. Leaders may appear to have succeeded or

failed only to have historians a generation later reverse the verdict.¹⁵

I believe in today's world, judgments of CIA leaders must be multi-dimensional, taking into account great strengths, streaks of mediocrity, and perhaps great flaws. If the great strengths correspond to the needs of a critical moment in history, the flaws will be forgiven, forgotten, or explained away.

How Does Leadership Play in a Team Environment?

Most of the leadership that can be called effective involves many individuals acting in a team relationship. This is certainly true at the CIA. Teams have leaders and most organizations manage better if one person is in charge, but not as a solo performer.

The organization chart does not describe the team. Two or three members of the governing body may be on the leadership team; most will not be. An individual in the third layer of management may be a member of the team, while second-layer executives who outrank him may not be. An individual not even associated with the organization may be a member of the team.

Team leadership enhances the possibility that different styles of leadership can be brought to bear simultaneously. If the leader is a visionary with little talent for practical steps, a team member who is a naturally gifted agenda-setter can provide invaluable support. No one knows enough to perform all the functions in our most demanding CIA leadership assignments today. Corporate boards understand this better than most. The CEO does not have to be good at everything. Some are financial wizards.

Some are superb managers. Some are gifted in public relations or selling. Some have great technical competence. The important thing is not that the leader cover all bases, but that the team collectively does so.

The best leader is one who builds the appropriate talent and skill into the team. Every President since Truman has admired the hard driving, plain-spoken man from Missouri -- a man so battered by criticism while in office, yet so well treated by history. Few, in praising Truman, mention one of his greatest qualities -- his gift for surrounding himself with individuals of exceptional ability.¹⁶

John F. Kennedy too had an exceptional capacity to draw talent to him, and to establish alliances that pulled the best performance out of his aides and advisors. He quickly established ties with the most diverse types -- seasoned political officials, totally non-political academics, military people, and civil servants.¹⁷

Recruiting team members of high caliber is not the first instinct of individuals who hold power. All too often they recruit individuals who have as their prime qualities an unwavering loyalty to the boss and no personal power base that would make insubordination possible. When those criteria prevail, what might have been a leadership team becomes, all too often, a ruling clique or circle of group-thinkers.¹⁸

Such a clique generally neglects a prime task of the team, to stimulate widening circles of supplementary leadership. Such an extended network reaching out from the leadership center carries

messages both ways. It can be equally effective in communicating the intentions of leadership or in receiving a broad range of advice and backing. This task is essential to the CIA in its intelligence analysis role within the intelligence community.

LEADERSHIP ROLES: WHAT ARE THE TASKS THAT LEADERS PERFORM?

Examination of the tasks performed by leaders will take us to the center of some most interesting questions concerning leadership. Questions that hopefully senior CIA leaders are asking to help guide them in shaping the future CIA. It also will help to distinguish among the kinds of leader. Leaders differ noticeably in how well they perform the various functions.

Nine tasks which describe these functions will be discussed:

- envisioning goals
- affirming values
- motivating
- managing
- achieving a workable level of unity
- explaining
- serving as a symbol
- representing the group
- renovating

This list is not all inclusive, but represents the most significant functions of leadership to be kept in mind as we develop future CIA leaders.

Envisioning Goals

I believe the two tasks at the heart of the common belief of leadership are goal-setting and motivating. If you ask someone what leaders do, the answers tend to focus on these two functions. Leaders point us in the right direction and tell us to get moving.

Leaders perform the function of goal-setting in diverse ways. Some assert a vision of what the group (organization, community, nation) can be at its best. Other leaders point us toward solutions to our problems. Still others, presiding over internally divided groups, can define overreaching goals that unite followers and focus energies. In today's complex world, the setting of goals may have to be preceded by extensive research and problem-solving.

The relative roles of leader and followers in determining goals vary from organization to organization. Higher authorities pass goals to leaders. The CIA division chief or the industrial factory manager may be excellent leaders, but many of their goals will have been set at higher levels.

Goals emerge from many sources. The culture of the organization itself specifies certain goals; followers have their concerns; higher authority makes its wishes known. Leaders accept some goals as given, make their contribution, select and reformulate a set of objectives. It may sound as though leaders have only marginal freedom, but there is usually considerable opportunity, even for lower-level leaders, to put their personal emphasis and interpretation on the setting of goals.

There is inevitable tension between long- and short-term

goals. Followers are not really comfortable with the unevenness of short-term goal-seeking, and they value the stability that comes with a clear vision of far horizons. Leaders who hold to long-term goals must ask followers to defer immediate satisfaction in at least some areas -- and that does not always build popularity.

Affirming Values

Civilizations hold a shared vision, shared norms, expectations and purposes. When one thinks of the world's great civilizations, the most graphic images are of monuments left behind -- the Pyramids, the Parthenon, the Mayan temples. In truth, all the physical splendor was but a byproduct. The civilizations themselves, from beginning to end, existed in the minds of men and women.¹⁹

If we look at our own communities (the CIA community included), we see the same reality; a community lives in the minds of its members -- in shared assumptions, beliefs, customs, ideas that give meaning, ideas that motivate. Among the ideas are "values." In any healthy and harmonious community, people come to have shared views concerning right and wrong, better and worse -- in personal conduct, in governing, in art, whatever. They decide what things they will define as legal or illegal, good taste or bad. They have little or no need to be neutral about such matters.

Society's religious beliefs and its philosophy will symbolize values. Every healthy society celebrates its values. Values carry the message of shared purposes, shared standards, and shared ideas of what is worth living and fighting for.

They have immense motivating power which a leader can utilize.²⁰

Motivating

Leaders do not normally create motivation out of thin air. They direct existing motives. To do this, they must understand the hopes, abilities, and fears of their followers; the bread-and-butter needs (jobs, housing, health care) and the need for security in a broader sense -- confidence in the ability of the organization or community to solve its problems. They must comprehend their followers' need for a good future -- for improvement of their life and a better life for their children. It is through understanding these things that leaders stir us to appropriate action.

Any group or organization has a great variety of motives. Effective leaders tap those motives that serve the purposes of collective action in pursuit of shared goals. They arrange individual and group goals. They deal with the situations that often lead group members to withhold their best efforts. They call for the kind of effort and restraint, drive, and discipline that make for great performance. They create an environment in which there is a pride in making significant contributions to shared goals.

Managing²¹

Most managers exhibit some leadership skills, and most leaders on occasion find themselves managing. As discussed earlier, leadership and management are different, but they overlap. It makes sense to include managing in the list of tasks leaders perform.

The paragraphs that follow focus on those aspects of leadership that one might describe as managing without slipping into a customary description of managing as such, and to find terminology and phrasing broad enough to cover the diverse settings in which leadership occurs.

Planning and priority setting. Assuming one sets broad goals, someone has to plan, fix priorities, choose means, and formulate policy. These are functions often performed by leaders.

Organizing and Institution-building. We have all seen leaders enjoy their brilliant moment and then disappear because they lacked a gift for building their purposes into institutions.

Someone has to design the organizations and processes through which substantial tasks get done over time. Many who have written on leadership have noted that, ideally leaders should not regard themselves as indispensable, but should enable the group to carry on. Institutions are a means to that end. Jean Monnet, the French economist who led the movement to unify western Europe in the 1950s and 1960s, said, "Nothing is possible without men; nothing is lasting without institutions."²²

Keeping the System Functioning. Presiding over the organization through which individuals coordinate their efforts to achieve shared goals sounds like a characteristic management task. Clearly, most leaders find themselves occasionally performing one or more of these tasks:

- mobilizing and allocating resources
- ensuring the continuing vitality of the team

- creating and maintaining appropriate procedures
- delegating and coordinating
- providing a system of incentives
- supervising, and evaluating.

Agenda-setting and Decision-making. The goals may be clear, the organization appropriately structured and running smoothly, but someone must deal with agenda-setting and decision-making functions. The announcement of goals without a proposed program for meeting them is a familiar enough occurrence -- but not one that builds credibility. There are leaders who can motivate and inspire, but who cannot conceptualize a course of action, cannot visualize the path to a goal in terms of practical, feasible steps. Leaders who lack that skill must bring onto their team people who have it.

Exercising Political Judgment. In our society, persons directing substantial efforts find they are presiding over many followers within their organization and contending with many outside. Each has his or her needs. One task of the leader/manager is to make the political judgments necessary to prevent secondary conflicts of purpose from blocking progress toward primary goals.

Achieving Workable Unity

Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language defines a pluralistic society as one in which there are many different groups, each with its own purposes. Collisions are inevitable and often a healthy part of the process. Conflict is

necessary for oppressed groups that must fight for the justice they are due. All our elected officials know the intense conflict of the political campaign. In fact, one could argue that willingness to engage in battle when necessary is a sign of leadership.

Most leaders most of the time are striving to diminish conflict rather than increase it. Some measure of cohesion and mutual acceptance is an absolute requirement of social functioning.

Leaders must deal with both external and internal conflict. Leaders can no longer confine their attention to the organization over which they have jurisdiction. Today they live in a world of interacting, colliding organizations. The CIA's position within the intelligence community is a good example. Leaders of any particular organization have no choice but to consider the need for mutually workable arrangements with organizations external to theirs. Leaders unwilling to do so are not serving the long-term interests of their followers.

Conflict Resolution. Leaders must be concerned with conflict resolution, and in pursuing that concern, must develop appropriate skills.

Leaders, skilled in the art of resolving conflict, will reduce the rhetoric and posturing on both sides of the dispute. They will search for a solution that gives each side the opportunity to compromise without losing face. Such leaders go to the root of the communication breakdown, whether it is anger, fear, mistrust, or differing understandings and definitions. They create many kinds of interchange, letting each side speak and requiring

each side to listen. They urge each side to understand the way the other perceives the problem, recognizing that how adversaries perceive the problem generally is the problem. They generate alternate solutions, seeking among the interests held by adversaries those interests that represent a common ground.²³

Trust. Much depends on the general level of trust in the organization or society. The varied and complex work of our agency would come to a halt if people did not trust other people most of the time. Many circumstances occur to reduce that trust, but one may be sure that if our agency is functioning at all, some level of elementary trust survives.

If the level of trust is high, division and conflict are easier to heal; as it diminishes, the healing of divisions becomes difficult. Leaders can do much to preserve the necessary level of trust. The first requirement is that they have the capacity to inspire trust in themselves.

Explaining

"Explaining" sounds too simplistic to belong on a list of the tasks of leadership, but every leader should recognize it. People want to know what the problem is, why we ask them to do certain things, how they relate to the larger picture. Explaining requires access to communication channels to establish and maintain a broad network among those segments of the organization that keep ideas in circulation -- office directors, advocacy groups, chief executive officers, and so on.

Serving as a Symbol

The leader is inevitably a symbol. The intelligence analyst singled out to be division chief discovers with some discomfort that his old friends set him apart in subtle ways. He tries to keep the old friendships, but things have changed. He is now a symbol of management.

In a group threatened with internal strife, the leader may be a crucial symbol of unity. In a minority group's struggle to find its place, combative leaders -- troublesome to others -- may be to their people the perfect symbol of their anger and their struggle.²⁴

Most leaders become aware of the symbolic aspects of their role and make effective use of them. One 20th Century leaders who did so skillfully was Gandhi. On the issues he chose to do battle, by the way he conducted his campaigns, in the jail terms he served, by fasting, and in his manner of dress, he symbolized his people, their desperate need, and their struggle against oppression.²⁵

Representing the Group

Representing the group in its dealings with others is a significant leadership task.

People say that all human elements (organizations, groups, communities, etc.) that make up society are increasingly interdependent.²⁶ The corporate CEO is constantly coping with external groups, all levels of Government, competitors, investors, the media, consumer's advocacy groups, environmental groups, foreign governments, and so on. A member of the President's

Cabinet must deal not only with the White House, many congressional committees, and the press, but the General Accounting Office, an ever more powerful Office of Management and Budget, and many politically powerful lobbies and interest groups. Individuals who have spent their careers in the world of the specialist or within the boundaries of a narrow organization (their CIA directorate, their profession) are ill-equipped for such leadership tasks. The young potential leaders in the CIA must learn early to cross boundaries and to know many operating environments.

Given the broader demands on a leader, it is not easy to hold fast to the traditional idea of a leader with a clearly defined following. Those who exercise leadership in dealing with organizations external to theirs are doing so without a grant of authority over those external groups. The traits that enable them to reach and lead their followers may be ineffective in external dealings. The military leader, revered by his troops, may be offensive to civilian groups. The business leader who is effective within the business community may be lost in dealing with politicians and the media. A distinctive characteristic of the ablest leaders is that they do not flinch from external representation. They see the long-term needs and goals of their followers in the broadest context, and they act accordingly. The most capable mayors think not only of their city, but the metropolitan area and the region. Able business leaders are alert to the political climate and to world economic trends.²⁷

Renovating

Leaders do not need to be renovators. They can: lead people down old paths, use old slogans, and pursue old objectives when appropriate. Leaders need to know when the tried and true will satisfy the need and when it is necessary to strike out in a new direction. The world changes with uncertain swiftness and direction. Today's world environment is an excellent example. Too often the old paths are blocked, and the old solutions no longer solve anything.²⁸ DeGaulle, writing of France's appalling unpreparedness for World War II, said:

The Army became stuck in a set of ideas which had their heyday before the end of the First World War. It was all the more inclined that way because its leaders were growing old at their posts, wedded to errors that had once constituted their glory.²⁹

One should not seek change for its own sake. The consequences of change may be very good, very bad, or something in between. All renovation is a blend of continuity and change -- evolution and revolution. Our problem is that to abandon change is not an option today. Events bombard us that we have no control over, and change will occur. The question for senior CIA leaders is, will it be the kind of change that will preserve our key values, enhance the vitality of the organization and ensure its future?

Founders create organizations to serve vital purposes. All too often, the founding purposes fade and what finally gets served are the purposes of institutional self-enhancement. It happens in hospitals to the detriment of patients, in schools to the detriment of students, in Government to the detriment of the American people.

It is rarely the result of evil intent: it happens because means tend to triumph over ends, form triumphs over spirit, and the characteristic effects of the ivory tower syndrome prevail.³⁰

Effective renovation depends on the selection of methods for reaching the sought after goals. When new realities call for new methods, it turns out that the old ways of doing things have hardened into unchangeable routines. A maze of attitudes, habits, perceptions, assumptions, and unwritten rules block innovation. Some CIA defenders of worn out ways say, "That is our way of doing it. That is what made us great!" The consequence is that although renovation seems like a motherhood issue -- who could oppose it in principle? -- it is rarely popular in practice. It threatens settled ways of thinking and acting. It seems to undermine established interests -- though it may be the only way to save such interests. The CIA is facing the question of renovation today. How will our leaders act?

SUMMARY

It is difficult for any organization, the CIA included, to preserve a measure of creativity in the young people who will eventually perform leadership functions. All too often on the long road up, young leaders become "servants of what is" rather than "shapers of what might be." In the long process of learning how the organization works, they receive rewards for playing within the intricate structure of existing rules, and when they reach the top are likely to be trained prisoners of the structure. This is not all bad; every vital organization reaffirms itself. However, no

organization can stay vital for long unless some of its leaders remain sufficiently independent to help it change and grow.

As I previously highlighted in this paper, the future is not determined. The result of decisions made by our current and up and coming CIA leaders will, in large part, shape that future. These decisions will not only affect our organization but our nation as well.

There is no activity in human undertaking that is more fascinating, more challenging, and more rewarding than leading large and complex organizations, such as the CIA, with an important mission. The leaders who are willing to grow, learn, listen, acknowledge mistakes, teach followers, set goals, and maintain high standards are leaders who can help raise an organization to new heights.

Any attempt to describe a social process as complex as leadership inevitably makes it seem more orderly than it is. Leadership is not tidy. We make decisions that others may revise or reverse. Misunderstandings are frequent, inconsistency unavoidable. Achieving a goal may simply make the next goal more urgent: inside every solution is the seed of a new problem. Are our current and future CIA leaders ready for these formidable tasks? Remember, successful leaders will find a way of dealing with problems; no matter what the problems are!

ENDNOTES

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